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SUBJECT: Niger: National Assembly President Elected

Ref: Niamey 899

¶1. On November 25, deputies elected former Prime Minister and current President of the National Movement for the Development of Society (MNSD) Seini Oumarou to serve as President of the National Assembly. Oumarou stated that his immediate goals are to, "Boost the fortunes of the National Assembly and deal with the real concerns of the people." Oumarou added, "We need to make haste and accelerate the rhythm of our work in order to efficiently deliver on the people's most pressing expectations...the parliament I have the privilege to lead will focus its action on a responsible check on the Executive's actions and increased lawmaking."

¶2. The following is a list of members who were elected to executive positions within the National Assembly; while MNSD is the ruling party, the PNA is an opposition party, and the PMT, RSD, RDP, and UNI are parties aligned with MNSD:

- Saadou Bawa, First Vice President, MNSD;
- Mahamane Jean Philippe Padonou, Second Vice President, RSD;
- Lawan Magagi, Third Vice President, Independent;
- Mohamed Ben Omar, Fourth Vice President, RDP;
- Abdoura'ouf Sidi, First Treasurer, MNSD; and
- Tanimoun Oumarou, Second Treasurer, RDP.

Secretaries:

- Salamatou Balla Goga, MNSD;
- Boukar Fatouma Makinta, MNSD;
- Sardao Amadou Tintouma, PMT; and
- Ado Makama, Independent.

¶3. Finally, the following permanent commission presidents were named:

- Siddo Elhaj, Finance, MNSD;
- Sanoussi Tambari Jackou, Economic Affairs, PNA;
- Issa Lemine, General Affairs, Independent;
- Abdourrahmane Hama, Foreign Affairs, RSD;
- Amadou Salifou, Cultural and Social Affairs, MNSD;
- Adam Effangal, Rural Development, MNSD;
- Mohamed Houma, Defense and Security, RDP; and
- Amadou Ali Djibo, General Reporter of Finances, UNI.

¶4. Comment: Before adopting the new constitution on August 4, the position of Prime Minister (PM) carried considerable clout, including serving as head of government. Under the new constitution, however, the role of PM is not defined clearly, and assumes a largely ceremonial role, while the president serves as both head of state and head of government. Given the reduced stature of the PM position under the new constitution, and the opportunity to head the National Assembly, Oumarou's resignation of his past position, election to the National Assembly, and election

to its presidency represents both his lateral and vertical political mobility. In his new position Oumarou has traded up to a position where he can assist the Executive by guiding key legislation through the system. (Note: MNSD and aligned parties now hold most offices not only in President Tandja's administration, but also within the National Assembly. End note). End comment.

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